Modernization of ESI hospitals

*359. SHRI R.K. ANAND :

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA :

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have plans to modernize ESI hospitals throughout the country;

(b) if so, the budget provision earmarked for this purpose for the year 2003-04; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SAHIB SINGH VERMA) : (a) to (c) The ESI Corporation has plans to modernize its hospitals throughout the country. The ESI Corporation has provided Rs. 54.93 crores in the Budget for the year 2003-04 for purchase of modern equipment to upgrade the ESI Hospitals. In addition one existing ESI Hospital in each State is being converted into a Model Hospital with all modern facilities for which Rs. 156.07 crores have been budgetted during 2003-04.

On Demand telephone connections

†*360. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering any proposal to provide telephones on demand in the country, particularly in rural areas;

(b) whether Government have examined the feasibility of providing technologies having low running cost, minimum maintenance, cheap and reliable in rural and remote areas; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE) : (a) New Telecom Policy, 1999 already envisages making available telephones on demand in the country including rural areas. This is to be implemented with the help of all the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.